

Photo Display Honors Policemen Killed

By LARRY WEIST

Three Provo police officers have died of gunshot wounds since the settlement of the city in 1849 and each is remembered by a photograph which hangs near the entrance of the police department in the city complex.

Two were shot while making arrests — the third accidentally shot himself while leaning back in a chair in the court house and the exact details of the shooting remain a mystery.

Only one suspect was ever caught and charged.

In 1873 Provo was a peaceful village of 2,400 population supplying the mercantile needs of the surrounding farm and mining areas. But on Oct. 15, Police Chief Albert H. Bowen was gunned down in front of the Stubbs and Dunkley Saloon, believed to be located on the 400 West block of Center Street.

Harrison Carter, a Provo resident, allegedly shot and mortally wounded Bowen in the head in the presence of a good-sized crowd in the street in front of the saloon on the afternoon. He was charged with the shooting in a complaint filed in the local justice court.

The Salt Lake Daily Tribune for Oct. 16, said two shots were fired — one in the ground and the other at Bowen's head.

Conversed Freely

Chief Bowen was able to converse freely the day after the shooting and it appeared for a while that he might recover.

The newspaper account asserted that about a half hour or so before the shooting, Carter had an altercation with a man named Worsley at the saloon, went home and armed himself, then returned to the saloon.

Some high words were reported between Carter and others in front of the drinking establishment then Carter was claimed to have pulled out his Navy revolver and fired into the ground, swearing that no policeman could arrest him. According to the accounts, chief Bowen, who possibly had been called to the scene after the first altercation, stepped forward and told Carter he could arrest him.

While the chief was a few feet from him, Carter allegedly pulled the trigger and the revolver flashed full in the face of the officer.

Two or three other police officers were standing nearby but the assailant managed to



ALBERT H. BOWEN, left, Provo's chief of police in 1873, was the first Provo officer to be killed in line of duty. He was shot and fatally wounded by an assailant in front of a local saloon. One Harrison Carter was



charged with the crime. William Strong, right, special policeman, was shot and killed by a tramp June 27, 1899. His murderer was never caught although scores of arrests were made.

get on a horse and ride out of town.

A.H. Bowen, Provo's first police officer to be killed in the line of duty, died three days after being shot. Two days later he was buried.

Bowen's obituary recorded in the Deseret Evening News three days after the funeral said it was held before a large assemblage of citizens. The body was borne from the Bowen house to the meeting house by police officers, and was met by the mayor and city council at the chapel gate.

Funeral addresses were given by John Milner and Mayor A.O. Smoot. The body was followed to the grave in the city cemetery by the police department on foot and the city politicians in carriages.

Exactly two months after the shooting of Bowen, Harrison Carter was brought into court by the county sheriff and witnesses Albert Haws and Samuel Harding were sworn in and testified for the prosecution. Justice Whipple ordered that Carter be committed to prison and there safely kept to appear before the

First District Court at the next regular term for Utah County to answer any and all indictments that may be found against him.

A kinsman who had been held for a time as a possible accomplice, was released with no evidence found to support such a charge.

No Record Found

The fate of Harrison Carter after he left the Provo justice court is unknown. A search of records at the state prison and state archives has failed to disclose the disposition of the matter.

Twenty-six years after the murder of Chief Bowen, William Strong was shot and killed, allegedly by a tramp at about 12:45 a.m. June 27, 1899.

Strong had been a police officer in Provo 23 years. He was 59 years old and had lived in Provo since crossing the plains in 1855.

Just a few days before his death the mayor appointed him a special policeman to handle the many tramps entering the city. Strong chose John Cummings, his son-in-law, to

patrol with him. Ironically, the tramp suspected of killing Strong was named Cummings.

Cummings was temporarily out of town but Strong told the mayor he thought there would be no danger until he returned. On the night of his death, Sheriff George Storrs, Marshall Knight and Joseph Strong, William's brother, were with him until about midnight, some 45 minutes before his death.

The exact circumstances surrounding the death of Strong are unknown except that at 12:10 a Denver and Rio Grande freight train arrived in Provo from the east and it is believed Strong arrested a tramp.

The railroad night operator named Hopkins was probably the last resident to see Strong alive. He said that Strong had come from the stone works just west of the station when the train pulled in. Shortly thereafter Hopkins saw him talking to a tramp near the water tank east of the station and then saw the pair walk up town.

They went as far as Third and J Streets together. The

theory is that revolver which slipped out of officer in back. It must have been who pulled it and was then a tramp.

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Strong died instantly as a single bullet entered his heart, stated published accounts.

Policeman Frank Tucker who would be killed just 11 days short of five years later as a bullet entered his heart, was standing on J Street near the First National Bank corner and rushed to the scene on his bicycle.

Fire Bell Tolls

The fire bell was vigorously tolling by 1 a.m. The few guns on hand at the court house were handed out to trusted citizens who were sent out in pairs on all roads leading from the city with instructions to arrest all tramps and strangers who tried to pass them.

In less than an hour all of the highways were thoroughly watched and the patrols started bringing in tramps. By morning more than a score had been brought in.

Suspicion was directed mainly on a 21-year-old Negro named John Cummings arrested in Lehi the next day.

Marshall Thomas of Lehi captured the suspect and brought him to Provo. The suspect was eating breakfast at 7 a.m. at Hammer's place and the officer waited for him to come out. When Thomas called on him to stop, Cummings ran and it took two shots in the air to stop him.

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suspect was in Lehi at 9 p.m. the night of the murder and would have had time to return to Lehi from Provo during the night. A horse was stolen in Provo that night in the west end of the city and a horseman was heard riding into Lehi at about 3 a.m. The bullet that killed Strong was a .38 caliber, the same caliber as the pistol that Cummings carried.

Another Suspect

A tramp described as a "hard looking specimen of humanity" was arrested near the River Bridge and searched but nothing was found. However, a Detective Katchum of Helper told the police that when he searched the man earlier he had a gun. When the tramp was asked what he had done with it, he said he had sold it but was unable to say when and where.

Sheriff Storrs was certain the man wasn't telling the truth and ordered a search made where he was arrested. A .38 caliber pistol was found and also jewelry and other articles allegedly stolen from the Scofield store. Three chambers of the gun were empty and appeared to have been recently shot.

Two tramps were found who claimed they saw the suspect get off the train the night Strong was killed, but they didn't see him arrested. Another tramp was locked up with the suspect in an effort to gain information from him.

Seventy-five men were still guarding the city roads on Thursday, two days after the killing of Strong. A Negro was found by Mrs. Joseph Kirkwood that day hiding in the weeds on Fifth Street, between G and H Streets. He was believed to have been hiding there all day.

The assailant was never caught and Strong was buried two days after his death in what was called one of the most

impressive funerals ever witnessed in Provo.

At 10 a.m. all businesses closed in honor of Strong. Flags flew at half-mast and everything was as quiet as on a Sunday.

At 10:30 a.m. the bell began tolling softly and shortly after, the funeral cortege began its trip to the stake tabernacle preceded by a honor guard of 50 Black Hawk War veterans under Commander J.M. Westwood.

White Casket

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Several persons were in the building and ran into the room and saw Ross standing over Tucker shouting "Frank, Frank!"

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